GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:382
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2007
INTER LINKING OF RIVERS
Barman Shri Hiten

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee of Experts on the inter-linking of rivers has considered the recommendations of the previous Task Force on the issue;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Experts Committee on each of the recommendations of the previous Task Force alongwith the decisions taken thereon by the Committee and the Government?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 382 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.4.2007 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING INTER-LINKING OF RIVERS

(a) to (c): A Task Force under the Chairmanship of Shri Suresh. P. Prabhu, the then Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) was constituted during December, 2002 on Inter Linking of Rivers (ILR). The recommendations of Task Force are annexed at Annexure I. The Task Force completed its work and submitted Action Plan − I during April, 2003 giving outline of time schedule for completion of Feasibility Reports, Detailed Project Reports, Estimated Cost, Implementation Schedule, concrete benefits and Advantages of the project. Action plan − II giving alternative options for funding and execution of the projects and suggestion on methods for cost recovery etc. was also submitted during April, 2004. Task Force on Interlinking of Rivers (TF − ILR) was wound up w. e. f. 31.12.2004 on completion of its mandated task. A Special Cell has been constituted to look after the residual routine work of the TF − ILR and for taking follow up action on the Inter linking of rivers Programme under the Ministry of Water Resources (MOWR).

MoWR has also constituted a Committee of environmentalists, social scientists and other experts on interlinking of rivers with a view to make the process of proceeding on ILR consultative on 28.12.2004. The role of Committee is advisory in nature and it is required to render its advice to the government from time to time on its terms of reference (ToR). ToR of this Committee are given at Annexure II. Three meetings of the Committee were held on 18.01.2005, 28.10.2005 and 4.9.2006. During these meetings, experts gave various suggestions on ToR for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) & modalities for preparation of DPR of Ken − Betwa Link and on ToR for its comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The ToR for the preparation of DPR of Ken-Betwa link has been approved by the Government incorporating the views of the Committee of experts. Also, Ministry of Environment and Forests has conveyed its approval on the ToR for EIA studies of this link on 10th April, 2007.

ANNEXURE-I REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 382 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.4.2007 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING INTERLINKING OF RIVERS

(i) Task Force got prepared Terms of Reference (TOR) for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) through M/s Engineers India Ltd. (EIL) for providing guidance on norms of appraisal of individual project.

(ii) On the issue of suitable mechanism for bringing out speedy consensus amongst the States, Task Force has suggested Meeting at the highest level to agree after the technical-level discussions with emphasis that outstanding issues should be such that they can be addressed in DPR stage.

(iii) The TF − ILR has stated that the peninsular links are the right component to begin with. Top priority links identified by TF − ILR are:

a) Ken − Betwa link UP & MP

b) Parbati − Kalisindh − Chambal link MP & Rajasthan

(iv) On this basis of report of IIM, Ahmedabad, a two tier institutional/organizational setup has been suggested for the implementation of the programme on Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) along with a Council − "National River Water Development Council (NRWDC)" to act as the apex body of the proposed setup. The National Authority for Interlinking of Rivers (NAILR) is proposed as the first tier of the

proposed two tier organizational structure and the regional or branch offices or subsidiaries would act as "Link Instrument" and are proposed as the second tier of the organizational setup.

(v) TF − ILR consulted ICICI for funding options. ICICI has proposed that funding should be partly through public, public-private and private inputs. The exact requirement on realistic basis will be available only after the preparation of Detailed project Report (DPR) of all the links.

Based on NWDA studies National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has estimated that the cost of ILR project would be Rs. 4,44,331.20 crore which is 21-22% lower than the present rough estimate. NCAER is of the view that the programme would take nearly 35 − 40 years. However, with use of modern construction and Remote Sensing techniques, the programme at best could be completed in 25 years.

(vi) A Working Group on International dimensions constituted by Task Force on ILR has also suggested that at the present juncture, it is too early, to pursue the matter further at high political levels with the Nepal government. Regarding Bangladesh, it has been suggested that Dhaka will continue to raise the ILR issue in Joint River Commission and possibly in other bilateral fora. India should respond by reiterating the line taken in the JRC i.e., ILR is a concept, not a single project

ANNEXURE-II REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (c) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 382 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.4.2007 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING INTERLINKING OF RIVERS

Terms of Reference:

The Committe will advise the Government on the following aspects of the proposed project.

Environmental and socio-economic issues covered in the Term of Reference (TOR) for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) finalized by the Task Force.

Rehabilitation & Resettlement package for the persons affected by ILR programme keeping in view the national R&R policy and structure of the agency for its implementation.

Additional studies needed to be carried out, to address any other concerns in the ILR Programme.

Impacts of proposed inter basin transfer of water links on settlements, occupations and other socio-economic activities, while preparing the DPRs.

Adoption of appropriate measures for optimum utilizations of transferred water especially in the water short basins while preparing the various DPRs.

Consideration of the above issue/aspects so as to cover the impact studies of intra-state river linking proposals while preparing their DPRs.